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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 000234

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [ASEC](#) [SU](#) [DARFUR](#)

SUBJECT: SUDAN: GETTING PAST "NO" ON SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

Classified By: USDEL Member E. Tariot. Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

11. (C) SUMMARY AND COMMENT: Skilled AU mediation has wrested control out of the hands of the incapable chairman of the Security Arrangements Committee and established some promising common ground between the parties at the Darfur Peace Talks. The Movements, superficial grasp of the modalities of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration continues to stifle meaningful progress in cross-table plenary discussions between the parties. Tactical maneuvers by the Sudanese Armed Forces along the outskirts of Movement-held areas have reportedly heightened acute food shortages within the Movements, field ranks, giving credence to SLM/Minnawi and JEM field commanders, concern that their political brethren may be negotiating their defeat at table. Field command dissent (and the difficulties of obtaining militia-level buy-in at the Talks) remains another barrier to progress, exacerbating the Movements, lack of negotiating confidence opposite a skilled, professional, national military delegation. Shifting and extremely close-hold security arrangements, red-lines within the Government of National Unity,s (GNU) negotiating posture, all combine to create drag on the pace -- and ultimate closure -- of the Peace Talks as a whole. AU technical advisors argue that resultant delays could be overcome with an increase of skilled, technical military advisors with DDR implementation experience. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

12. (C) Progress on the security arrangements front remains promising, though the tough issues relating to disarmament have not yet been discussed. The skilled mediation efforts of AU technical advisor Laurie Nathan have resulted in the parties opting out of AU mediation in lieu of cross-party discussions between the GNU and the Movements -- a first for the Security Arrangements Commission. Intensive, collaborative problem-solving negotiations between the parties at the working group-level resulted in a preliminary enhanced ceasefire document on track for an agreement late this week. Oriented toward strengthening the monitoring, enforcement, and verification abilities of AMIS, the Joint Ceasefire Commission, the Joint Commission, and the Joint Humanitarian Facilitation and Monitoring Unit, the document also exacts precise concessions out of the parties to ensure compliance.

13. (C) Although Nathan,s diligence has shown positive results thus far, discussions between USDEL and a variety of interlocutors at the Darfur Peace Talks indicate that without improving the comprehensive technical capacity of the Movements, progress in the Security Arrangements Commission as a whole will continue to be inadequate. In one-on-one discussions between the Movements and AU technical advisors, all three factions (JEM, SLM/AW, and SLM/Minnawi) continue to be hobbled by their lack of understanding about disarmament and demobilization process. SLM/Minnawi negotiators confessed to AU security arrangements team member Jeremy Brickhill and Laurie Nathan (STRICTLY PROTECT) that field commanders continued to be concerned that &assembly points8 meant anything ranging from specific geo-coordinates vulnerable to SAF attack to concentration camps. SLM/AW negotiators, in similar discussions, repeatedly asked at what point disarmament was most appropriate during the transition period. When queried by the AU advisors as to what SLM/AW meant by &transition,8 advisors were met with &what does it routinely mean?8 as the response.

14. (C) Movements, skittishness during security arrangements discussions is exacerbated not only by the political fragility of the Movements, negotiating position, but reported SAF strategic victories (as the Movements have categorized them to us) in the field. The December/January period remains one Darfur,s worst with regard to cease-fire violations, and allegations of under-reporting to the Joint Ceasefire Commission (CFC) by both sides only bolsters Movements, private claims to AU technical advisors that their current field deficits are significant. Large-scale military attacks have dropped off as Movements, leaders attempt to bolster credibility at the table through selective enforcement of the N,djamena Protocol. This downturn in what previously served as a re-supply activity, coupled with (apparently successful) tactical maneuvers by the Sudanese Armed Forces along the outskirts of Movement-held areas, has reportedly heightened acute food shortages within the Movements field ranks. Internal schisms between

per-diem-supplemented SLM/JEM political advisors and inconsistently paid and supplied SLM/JEM militia remain an undercurrent of the Talks. Mini Minnawi,s lead negotiator, Ali Tray, alleged to PoOff that the main reason behind Mini,s absence from the Talks is to keep the commanders &from throwing over the table in anger⁸ as they hear, third and fourth hand, of Minnawi,s claims to &Western Sudan,⁸ and media reports alleging progress in disarmament talks.

15. (C) The GNU,s limited negotiating mandate continues to keep the security arrangements commission off balance. Lead security arrangements negotiator General Ismat Abdelrahman noted to AU mediator that, although he could agree to decisions on integration and assembly independent from Khartoum, everything else required the approval, at a minimum, of the Minister of Defense. Stove-piping issues aside, the GNU delegation faces significant capacity issues of its own. Abdelrahman admitted to Nathan in a private mediation discussion that Khartoum remains highly concerned about its ability to disarm the Janjaweed. In a frank exchange that outlined the intense disagreement in government circles on how to best handle ultimate Movement integration, Nathan brought conversation to a standstill with his query on the status of GNU planning for Janjaweed disarmament. After a long pause, Abdelrahman admitted that the SAF remained uncertain that it was capable of being even marginally successful in executing the initiative, before recovering with a less-than-convincing acknowledgement that &it will be difficult.⁸

16. (C) Nathan offered the Deputy Secretary,s Special Representative to the Sudan (D/SpecRep) well-considered thoughts on how the USG (or other international partners could hold the GNU accountable to its international mandate to disarm Janjaweed and other Arab militias. The AU mediator offered a two-track approach focused on the negotiating table and targeted international pressure on the SAF. The latter calls for dedicating U.S. intelligence and other capabilities to ascertaining the scope and breadth of both known arms-trafficking routes into and out of Darfur and known/suspected munitions stockpiles. Such collection efforts, shared and coordinated with like-minded diplomatic partners, could be used to pressure the GNU to come to the table significantly reduced red-lines. Given the fact the GNU will offer up &the cheapest bottom-line possible,⁸ Nathan opined that only compelling evidence of GNU intransigence) beyond that of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Darfur) could force GNU to commit itself seriously to the security negotiations in the face of otherwise shaky (and therefore easily stalled) Movement position.

17. (C) D/SpecRep was enthusiastic about the idea, noting the USG,s enormous success in using satellite images of razed villages to pressure Sudan in the past. Once tied seriously to the Talks, Nathan continued, the international community could capitalize on the GNU,s Janjaweed disarmament concerns by focusing the debate (and subsequent agreement) on &neutralizing⁸ the Janjaweed threat. Nathan argued this was not meant to absolve the GNU of its responsibility to reign in its Janjaweed proxy, but rather establish a set of benchmarks to which the international community could reasonably hold the Government to account. (NOTE: In follow-on conversations, Nathan has offered USDEL a white paper on neutralization versus disarmament. USDEL will fax a copy to AF/SPG once available. END NOTE.)

18. (C) Capacity weaknesses and limited mandates aside, the chief obstacle to progress within the Security Arrangements Commission so far: the sizeable shortcomings its chief AU mediator, Nigerian General Geruba. He is unskilled at mediation, and is repeatedly bowled over by both parties during plenary discussions. Salim Mohammed Salim is familiar with Geruba,s inadequacies, but his unhappiness with the General,s approach has only forced Geruba to make defensive decisions unhelpful to the process. The entire AU security arrangements committee has approached USDEL and other select partners with their concerns, and noted that Salim is soliciting names to replace Geruba,s equally inadequate deputy. (NOTE: USDEL and AF have discussed a specific list of names that should be quickly submitted to Salim for his immediate consideration and action. Current ad-hoc mediator Laurie Nathan is scheduled to depart Abuja o/a February 9, making Washington,s swift signal to Salim all the more imperative. END NOTE.)

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